

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 NEA-10 L-03 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15

AID-05 CIAE-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-04

OPIC-06 SP-02 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /084 W

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R 121728Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9792

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 03926

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, UK

SUBJECT: FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS, MATERIALS & HARDWARE  
EXHIBITION, LONDON TRADE CENTER, JUNE 28 - JULY 2.

REF: (A) USDOC 16881; (B) USDOC 17519; (C) LONDON  
18350; (D) LONDON 19382; (E) LONDON 1297

1. "DAILY MAIL" IDEAL HOME SHOW OPENED AT OLYMPIA  
MAR. 9 WITH ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES PLANNING  
PARTNERSHIP'S AMERICAN COLONIAL-STYLE "PHILLIPSBURG"  
CENTER-PIECE HOUSE RECEIVING RAVE NOTICES. "TIMES"  
REVIEWER DESCRIBED "AGE OF ELEGANCE AT OLYMPIA WITH AN  
AMERICAN FLAVOR". "DAILY TELEGRAPH" REPORTED: "SOME OF  
THE BUYERS ARE SAYING THAT THE NEW FURNITURE FROM THE  
STATES (SIC) COULD BE THE BIGGEST THING IN THE FURNI-  
TURE DEPARTMENTS SINCE WE ALL TOOK TO THE SCANDANAVIAN  
LOOK 20 YEARS AGO. THE AMERICANS ARE USING RICH HARD-  
WOODS AND VENEERS LIKE CHERRY, PECAN AND ELM; WOODS  
OF WHICH WE HAVE BEEN STARVED. THEY HAVE A SENSIBLE  
HABIT, TOO, OF MAKING SENIOR AND JUNIOR RANGES OF THE  
SAME FURNITURE. THE BIG PIECES ARE DESIGNED FOR THE  
AFFLUENT MIDDLE-AGED; SMALL PIECES ARE FOR THE YOUNG-  
MARRIEDS WHO LIVE IN SMALL FLATS." ON SUBJECT OF  
(PHILLIPSBURG) "FOUR-BEDROOM HOME THAT'S ALL-AMERICAN  
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FOR THE U.K.", "TELEGRAPH" REVIEWER FOUND FABRICS

AND WALLPAPER (IMPORTED BY REGULAR LTC BSP EXHIBITOR T.T. DESIGN SERVICES) "FRESH AND STIMULATING", AND WAS IMPRESSED BY QUALITY AND DESIGN OF US LIGHTING FIXTURES. "FINANCIAL TIMES" REVIEWER LIKED "LUXURIOUS, EASY-TO-LIVE-WITH LOOK" OF US FURNITURE; "BEING NEITHER MODERN NOR REPRODUCTION, IT FITS EFFORTLESSLY INTO ALMOST ANY ENVIRONMENT" AND "QUALITY IS UNQUESTIONABLY EXCELLENT". POST IS AIRMAILING COMPLETE CLIPPING FILE, PLUS JAN. 17 "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR" FEATURE ARTICLE WHICH DESCRIBES BURGEONING UK RETAILER INTEREST IN QUALITY US FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS.

2. IT IS MOST URGENT THAT THIS INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM FOR US FURNITURE, FURNISHINGS AND FIXTURES BE COMMUNICATED TO AMERICAN INDUSTRY AS QUICKLY AND ENERGETICALLY AS POSSIBLE. STIMULUS FOR PROSPECTIVE EXHIBITORS DOES NOT LIE IN VAGUELY-DEFINED TRADE STATISTICS, WHICH ARE NOT REALLY USEFUL FOR MANY CONSUMER-GOODS INDUSTRIES IN ANY CASE. FACT IS THAT NO MEANINGFUL STATISTICAL HISTORY EXISTS (BEYOND GREATLY INCREASED LEVEL IMPORTS FROM US IN GENERAL CATEGORIES OF FURNITURE WHICH WAS EXPERIENCED IN 1974 AND MAINTAINED THROUGH 1975); HOWEVER, THIS ALSO MUST BE TRUE OF FURNITURE TRADE WITH IRAN, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT TEHERAN TC SHOW WAS SUCCESSFULLY PROCURED, AND CANNOT BELIEVE THAT UK MARKET PRESENTS GREATER PROBLEMS OR LESS ATTRACTION THAN THAT OF IRAN. MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN GENERALIZED TRADE FIGURES IS FACT THAT THREE MAJOR UK PROMOTIONS OF AMERICAN FURNITURE IN PAST YEAR HAVE NETTED SALES RESULTS FAR BEYOND PROMOTERS' EXPECTATIONS, AND IN EACH CASE HAVE PROMPTED REDOUBLING OF MARKETING EFFORTS HERE. THESE BRITISH FIRMS HAVE DISPROVED THEORY THAT US FURNITURE INDUSTRY IS APATHETIC AND UNEQUIPPED TO EXPORT.

3. IN ADDITION WE HAVE TRANSMITTED ALL AVAILABLE STATISTICS, WHICH, AS WE SAY, ARE NOT VERY SATISFACTORY.. BUSINESS MONITOR PQ 742 SENT DEC. 16 CONTAINS LATEST DETAILED DOMESTIC SALES AND FOREIGN TRADE FIGURES AVAILABLE. WE HAVE STRIVEN TO ANSWER ALL POINTS RAISED UNCLASSIFIED

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IN PARA 1 REF B SAVE QUESTION OF TERMS OF PAYMENT WHICH NORMALLY ARE HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL, HAVE NOT FORMED PART OF MARKET RESEARCH IN OUR EXPERIENCE, AND IN ANY CASE WOULD BE TAILORED TO CIRCUMSTANCE AS COMPANIES REACH AGREEMENT. IN REFS C, D AND E, PLUS NUMEROUS SHOW WRITE-UPS, SELECTED MAGAZINES, REPORTS OF INTERVIEWS, ETC., SENT TO YOU BEGINNING NOV.25, WE HAVE ATTEMPTED TO GUIDE EXHIBITOR PROCUREMENT

TOWARD UPPER-MIDDLE AND HIGHER-END RESIDENTIAL FURNITURE AND FURNISHINGS OF TYPE NOW RECEIVING SUCH ACCLAIM AT IDEAL HOME SHOW.

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4. TO EXTENT THAT MAJOR UK DEPARTMENT STORES OFTEN HAVE CONTRACT-FURNISHING ACTIVITIES, WE WOULD WELCOME HIGH QUALITY ITEMS IN THIS FIELD. HOWEVER, SUCH LINES AS PATIO FURNITURE LACK VITAL APPEAL OF SPECIAL WOODS, WIDE VARIETY OF FABRIC PATTERNS AND MATERIALS, ETC., AND WOULD HAVE TO HAVE REMARKABLE STYLING ADVANTAGE TO GAIN NOTICE HERE. LIKEWISE OFFICE FURNITURE WOULD HAVE TO BE OF SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT OPEN-PLAN DESIGN, OR UNIQUELY ATTRACTIVE VALUE-FOR-PRICE BOARDROOM TYPE INTERESTING ENOUGH TO COMPETE WITH DOMESTIC REPRODUCTIONS AND VAST SUPPLY OF GENUINE ANTIQUES. EQUALLY IMPORTANT WOULD BE PROCUREMENT OF THESE NON-RESIDENTIAL PIECES IN SUFFICIENT NUMBER TO JUSTIFY DIFFERENT KIND OF BUYER COMING IN FROM FAR CORNERS OF BRITAIN. HOWEVER, HIGHEST PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO EXHIBITION OF HIGH-QUALITY, RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR PIECES AND FURNISHINGS OF PROVEN

APPEAL TO FORM COHESIVE SHOW THEME, AND KEEPING IN MIND  
SPACE PROBLEMS INHERENT IN EXHIBITION OF THIS KIND.

5. EQUALLY URGENT CONCERN IS THAT PROCUREMENT  
REPORTEDLY IS JUST NOW GETTING UNDER WAY. MODE AND  
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TIMING OF SHIPMENT OF EXHIBITS, PLUS SHOW DESIGN  
AND SET-UP TIME, OBVIOUSLY ARE DIFFERENT FROM MOST  
TC SHOW THEMES, AND USDOC MUST FOCUS ON CRITICAL  
SHIPPING TIME FROM EAST COAST PORTS TO ENSURE ON-  
TIME DELIVERY IN LONDON. JAN. 12-15 HIGH POINT  
SHOW WOULD HAVE BEEN IDEAL PLACE FOR PROCURING US  
MAJORS, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THIS OPPORTUNITY WAS  
MISSED. NATIONAL HOME CENTER SHOW AT CHICAGO LIKE-  
WISE IS OVER. GREENVILLE SHOW APPEARS TO BE ONLY  
MARCH EVENT THAT WOULD MUSTER SUITABLE PROSPECTS  
(ASSUMING THAT MIAMI BEACH FURNITURE MART WILL  
CATER MOSTLY TO HOT-CLIMATE NEEDS).. APR. 22-30 HIGH  
POINT SESSION APPEARS MUCH TOO LATE TO BE USEFUL,  
ALTHOUGH WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT UK BUYERS WILL USE  
THAT OCCASION TO FIND NEW LINES. EXISTING UK  
REPS (WHO NORMALLY ARE NON-EXCLUSIVE) ARE VERY  
ACTIVE AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL SALES PROMOTERS  
AND EXHIBITORS.

LTC SHOW SHOULD HIGHLIGHT NEW SUPPLIERS AND PRODUCTS  
TAKING FIRST STEP IN QUALITY END OF UK MARKET.

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